

**News**

[Md. Lawmaker Says It's Time for Medicaid to Cover Adult Dental Care](#)

**Articles**

[SSB Consumption Declining But Remains High for Some Groups](#)

[Catalyzing Medicaid-Public Health Collaboration to Reduce Childhood Obesity](#)

[Keeping Up the Momentum to Extend CHIP](#)

**Events**

[Families USA Health Action Conference 2018, January 24-27, 2018](#)

[American Society on Aging Conference, March 26-29, 2018](#)

[Sixth Annual Public Health Research at Maryland Day, April 3, 2018](#)

[2018 National Oral Health Conference, April 16-18, 2018](#)

[2018 National School-Based Health Care Convention, June 24-27, 2018](#)

**Webinars**

[Collective Engagement: Lifelong Smiles Coalition, January 11, 2018](#)

[Pediatric Disease Management: The Role of the Dental Hygienist and Promotora de Salud in the Reduction of Childhood Caries, January 24, 2018](#)

**Continuing Education**

[Treating Tobacco Use in Maryland: Tools for Helping Your Patients Quit](#)

**Coming Soon**

# Maryland Dental Action Coalition

Optimal Oral Health for All Marylanders



## MDAC Makes Strong Case for Medicaid Adult Dental Benefits to Maryland General Assembly



Policy makers have a real opportunity to lower emergency room visits and costs through improved access to dental care, according to a MDAC study of emergency department visits by adults for chronic dental conditions in Maryland. The purpose of the study, authorized by the Maryland General Assembly's unanimous passage of SB 169, was to assess whether state funds could be reinvested to establish an adult dental benefit in Medicaid. The study results were submitted to the Maryland General Assembly's President of the Senate Mike Miller and House Speaker Michael Busch, and Maryland Secretary of Health Dennis Schrader on December 1, 2017.

Many Maryland adults face serious financial obstacles to obtaining dental care, which can lead to serious oral health issues that drive them to the emergency room with tooth pain and oral infections. Emergency rooms are unable to treat the causes of dental pain, so they treat the symptoms and send patients home with antibiotics, pain medications, or referrals for dental services that patients may not be able to afford. The high cost of treating symptoms in an emergency room without treating the underlying dental condition is costly, ineffective, and a poor use of resources.

In fiscal year 2016, Maryland adults made 42,327 emergency department visits for chronic dental conditions, with an average charge of \$537 per visit, for a total of \$22.7 million. These visits represent almost 2% of overall emergency room costs. Medicaid paid for 53% of those visits, even though Medicaid participants only account for 15% of the adult population in Maryland. This discrepancy is likely the result of the lack of consistent adult dental coverage in the Medicaid program.

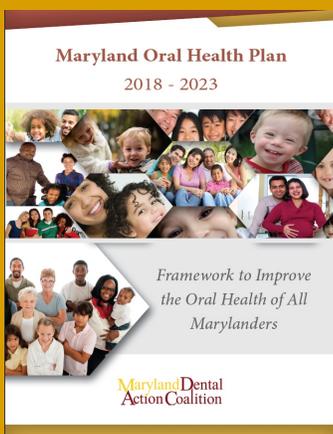
Maryland is behind most states in providing Medicaid adult dental coverage. Over two-thirds of states provide some kind of basic adult dental benefits. Maryland only provides adult dental coverage for narrow eligibility categories, such as pregnant women and young adults who have aged out of foster care. For most adults, Medicaid will only guarantee coverage for antibiotics and pain management for dental conditions. Maryland is a model for the nation in improving the oral health of children through the Medicaid program. We need to do the same for adults.

MDAC and its coalition partners across the state strongly advocate for Medicaid coverage of adult dental services. An adult dental benefit in Medicaid would help at-need adults prevent chronic dental conditions altogether, or have them effectively managed by community-based providers rather than have the symptoms of oral health conditions treated in an emergency department.

[Read the MDAC cover letter](#) submitted to the Maryland General Assembly with the report.

[Read the report](#) MDAC submitted to the Maryland General Assembly.

[Learn more](#) about the financial impact of hospital visits for dental conditions in Maryland.



## Updated Maryland Oral Health Plan, 2018-2023

### Resources

[Oral Health 2020 National Policy Landscape Resources](#)

[Brush, Book and Bed Implementation Guide](#)

[Strengthening Medicaid Long-Term Services and Supports in an Evolving Policy Environment: A Toolkit for States](#)

[Stem the Tide: Addressing the Opioid Epidemic](#)

[Compendium of Rural Oral Health Best Practices](#)

[ASTHO Telehealth Resource Guide](#)

[Oral Health America Medicare Dental Toolkit](#)

[Oral Health in America: Experiences of Older Adults and Persons with Disabilities](#)

[Maryland Department of Health HPV Toolkit](#)

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Oral Health Data Portal](#)

[Unlocking the Door to New Thinking: Frames for Advancing Oral Health Reform](#)

[Trust for America's Health Special Analysis: How Healthy is Your Congressional District?](#)

[Updates to the ASTDD Child Basic Screening Survey](#)

[ASTDD Dental Hygienist Liaisons Webcast: Strategies to Increase the Impact of State Dental Hygienist Liaisons](#)

### Legislative Contacts

[U.S. Senators \(MD\)](#)

[U.S. Representatives \(MD\)](#)

[E-mail MDAC](#) for a report on the rates of emergency department visits for chronic dental conditions in your county.

## Updated Maryland Oral Health Plan to Launch in January

MDAC will release the Maryland Oral Health Plan 2018-2023, an updated roadmap for improved oral health for all Marylanders, in January, in advance of National Oral Health Month in February.

The plan builds on the oral health improvements achieved since the release of the first state plan in 2011, identifies critical remaining gaps, and outlines actions needed to expand access to oral health care, prevent oral diseases and injury, and improve the oral health and overall health of all Marylanders. The updated plan is designed to enable the development of innovative strategies to meet the individual needs of each Maryland community.

The Maryland Oral Health Plan is financially supported by the Maryland Department of Health.

## MDAC Releases Results of Member Survey on Oral Health Access and Providers

Although great strides have been made to improve oral health care access in Maryland, there are still those without access to needed care and oral health providers. To help guide its work to ensure oral health care access for all, MDAC conducted a member survey to determine (1) barriers and opportunities to improve access to oral health care and (2) interest, knowledge and opinions of emerging workforce models in dentistry.

Survey results indicate that cost, transportation and a lack of understanding of the importance of good oral health were all barriers to care, and that MDAC members have a strong interest in learning more about emerging workforce models in dentistry.

Note: The [survey results](#) reflect the opinions of the respondents, but do not reflect an official position of the Maryland Dental Action Coalition.

## MDAC Mourns Loss of Dr. Greg McClure

Greg McClure, DMD, MPH passed away on November 27, 2017.

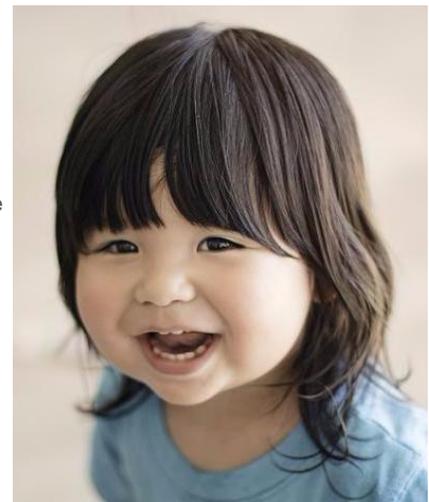
McClure was a strong supporter of the Maryland Dental Action Coalition, both as a member of the MDAC Board of Directors and in his role as Dental Director of the Maryland Department of Health's Office of Oral Health. He worked tirelessly to help ensure that all Marylanders have optimal oral health.

His passionate advocacy for oral health promotion, disease prevention, education, interprofessional collaboration and access to oral health care will be deeply missed by MDAC members, partners and stakeholders statewide.

## Head Start Standards Ensure Children are Up-to-Date on Health Care Services

Head Start's [child health status standard](#) requires program staff to determine whether a child is up-to-date on an age-appropriate preventive and primary health and oral health care schedule. The schedule, based on well-child visits and [dental periodicity schedules](#) defined by the [Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic, and Treatment benefit](#), provides comprehensive and preventive health care services for children enrolled in Medicaid.

Head Start programs can track a child's oral health status and care using [oral health forms](#) developed by the National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness. The forms are used to compile information on the child's current oral health status and the oral health services delivered during dental visits.



## CHIP Funding Delay Puts 9 Million Children at Risk

The following report on the current status of the Children's Health Insurance Program is from

## Contact Us

Do you have events or announcements you'd like us to post in the MDAC newsletter? Send them to [info@mdac.us](mailto:info@mdac.us). We'll make every effort to include them, as space permits.

## Support Us

### Support Maryland Dental Action Coalition Inc.

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[Go to smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)



### Families USA:

As Congress focuses on a tax plan that would take coverage from millions of people to give tax cuts to the wealthy and corporations, it is leaving behind our nation's children.

Congress allowed the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) to expire in September, leaving families wondering each day if this critical source of health coverage and care will still be there for their children. And Congress's inaction leaves states wondering if they will be left holding the bag.

Congress set the deadline for the renewal of funding for CHIP, which provides coverage for nearly 9 million children, more than two years ago. They are now almost 70 days past their own deadline. The House leadership has proposed a short-term plan to help states keep piecing CHIP funding together. This is not what Congress promised and this is not what states and kids need.

### [See our statement on the House leadership's proposed short-term CHIP fix.](#)

Families need Congress to make good on its promise and to enact a bipartisan 5-year funding extension of CHIP as quickly as possible.

Already, parents in some states have begun to receive notices that the CHIP coverage they rely on to protect their children's health and well-being will come to an end soon. If Congress does not act, coverage will be disrupted for those and millions more families.

Please share these resources with your networks and on social media to spread the word about the need to extend this vital program.

- Infographic: [3 Reasons to Renew Funding for CHIP](#)
- Factsheet: [CHIP Funding Delay Threatens Children's Health Care](#)
- Blog: [Tell the Senate to Pass a 5-Year CHIP Bill Now](#)
- Families USA's CHIP resource center, including [shareable graphics](#)

**MDAC Note: More than 137,000 children in Maryland receive insurance coverage through CHIP.**

## Families USA Seeks Oral Health Care Stories

Families USA has launched Oral Health for All, a multi-year campaign to raise awareness and build long-term support for expansion of oral health benefits.

Just like in other movements for health care, your voices will be critical in helping raise awareness of what's at stake.

Families USA wants to hear from you - what are you experiencing? What's keeping you from receiving the dental care you need? Tell them your story at [FamiliesUSA.org/Share-Your-Story](https://FamiliesUSA.org/Share-Your-Story).

## Baltimore CONNECT Seeks Community Dentists to Provide Dental Care

Baltimore CONNECT is seeking community dentists willing to donate their time and services to provide dental care to Baltimore area job seekers.

Baltimore CONNECT is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that works with a network of more than 20 community-based organizations and public health researchers from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health to better link social and healthcare services across Baltimore. Many of the clients at these organizations have unmet needs for dental care.

Baltimore CONNECT has secured access to facilities, including a dental chair, instruments, and dental assistant, but needs community dentists willing to provide acute and sub-acute oral health care. To volunteer your time and services, please contact Kaylin Ford at (410) 955-1932.

## MDAC Welcomes New Members



MDAC is pleased to welcome the following new members:

- Tiffany Harrison, RDH - Washington/Frederick County Dental Hygienists' Association
- Beverly (Sissy) Jimenez, DDS - Annapolis Pediatric Dentistry
- Beth Levine - KOFA Public Affairs

Join us! For further information about MDAC membership, [click here](#).

The mission of the Maryland Dental Action Coalition is to develop and maintain a statewide partnership of individuals and organizations working together to improve the health of all Marylanders through increased oral health promotion, disease prevention, education, advocacy and access to oral health care.